

Hanauma Bay Education Program's Creature Feature

Hawaiian Name: **Wana**

Common Name: **Black Sea Urchin**

Scientific Name: *Echinothrix diadema*



Indigenous

Family: Strongylocentrotidae

Name Origin: In Hawaiian, wana means a long spike or streak of light, because at dawn it appears as ray of light.

Size: Can grow up to 15 cm diameter.

Current Fishing Regulations: None

Description: Wana are round and they have long slender black spines that resemble needles. They have three kinds of projecting appendages: spine, tube feet and pedicellariae (pincers). The movable spines are purple and the most obvious of the three. The appendages are sensitive to touch and may respond to chemicals released into the water by predators. When body of wana is touched by a sharp object the spines move in the direction of the touch. The spines turn away if the body is touched by the blunt object. Wana are also sensitive to light and usually cover themselves with shells or stones in the day time. If the spines break off they will re-grow.

Warning: spines are venomous.

Habitat: Wana are able to adapt to areas which have a lot of wave activity because they usually hide half their bodies in near-by holes on the reef. Wana prefers to live on top of compared to holes in the reef.

Diet: Sea urchins are herbivorous and eat algae.

'Ōlelo No'eau:

Ka i'a hō'eha lima. *The fish that can hurt the hands.* The wana (sea urchin).

Ka i'a umi i ka hanu. *The fish that can holds the breath.* The wana, or sea urchin. The fisherman holds his breath as he dives for them.

Ka wana momona o Mokoli'i. *The fat sea urchins of Mokoli'i.* Mokoli'i, a small island off windward O'ahu, is known for its fine sea urchins.

Pua ka neneleau, momona ka wana. *When the neneleau blooms, the sea urchin is fat.* The neneleau blooms about the time when the hala fruit ripens. These were signs for uplanders that the sea urchins were